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SECURITY INFORMATION

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In intelligence, security is the "sea around us", the atmosphere or habitat in which intelligence must live. Thus while security can be both burdensome and bothersome, it is also critically essential -- so essential that one cannot assay the effectiveness of CIA without assaying its security system.

And yet because security is enforced through restraints and controls, it hobbles the operation of an intelligence system just as it safeguards the end results. As a result the exercise of security in intelligence is partly an exercise in balance. How can the agency attain maximum effectiveness without relaxing its security restrictions? And how can the agency achieve maximum security without handcuffing itself in excessive restraints?

The dilemma is not easily resolved. Few agencies are more vulnerable than CIA to the damage that can be done by deliberate or by careless disclosure. For not only could penetration of CIA reveal U. S. practices in intelligence but it might also enable the Soviet to repair its own security system while mapping a more effective pattern of deception.

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While security is in part an administrative problem, it is also a problem of people. For while investigations and guard systems, protective devices and document controls provide safeguards against security lapses, the ultimate problem in security is one of discretion among the agency's employees. Talkative employees are only scarcely less dangerous than disloyal ones. Thus a leakproof security system is dependent upon the leakproof security habits of agency personnel. But these habits must be inculcated and developed through indoctrination and security training. And as is so frequently the case with most good habits, security mindedness comes only with time.

During the agency's current busy period of personnel build-up, this task of security training has swollen in size. And while there have been few evidences of laxness in security procedures, there have been evidences of strain within the security system. However, once the agency is stabilized and the press to expand is eased, security practices within CIA may be expected to surpass even their present high-quality standards.

With the expansion of covert operations, both abroad and in training grounds here, security has been pressed to devise and protect cover on these sensitive projects. In several instances these cover-plans have leaked and non-critical compromises have resulted. Meanwhile the agency has acquired valuable experience in the touchy processes of

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setting up cover and this experience is already reflected in the use of sounder, more effective techniques.

No major penetrations of CIA have been uncovered even though counter-intelligence is estimated to have forestalled several possible penetrations. And not once has the Congress, the press, or the public alleged the infiltration of CIA by subversives.

But this does not mean the agency is not troubled by soft spots. Indeed the primary weakness in CIA's security system results from a condition that can be remedied only by Congress. Within the metropolitan area of Washington alone, the agency currently occupies a total of ■ separate structures, an increase of ■ in the last fifteen months. This dispersal constitutes an acute security hazard on which the Congress has already been briefed. The movement of persons, documents, equipment, and waste paper from building to building in this vulnerable complex exposes the agency to the daily danger of deliberate penetration.

One year ago CIA asked the Bureau of the Budget to find it secure quarters under a single safe roof. When the Bureau reported that no satisfactory structure could be found, it supported the agency in a request to Congress for new construction. But although the 82nd Congress authorized \$38,000,000 for construction, the necessary appropriations legislation failed in the House. A tentative site has been selected in downtown Washington for a CIA headquarters

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building and working drawings have been prepared by PSA. Just as soon as Congress reconvenes, CIA will resubmit its request for funds for this single safe structure.

Comprising as it does a wide variety of activities, some of which are admissible, many of which are not, CIA exists as an enigmatic agency both in official Washington and in the minds of the public. While it can without fear of compromise admit to its role as coordinator of the U. S. national intelligence, CIA must remain muzzled on its espionage activity and on its "cold war" department of dirty tricks. Yet contrarivise the public ascribes to CIA the role of U. S. "master spy" in almost total ignorance of its admissible coordinating functions. Consequently CIA is advertised almost exclusively as the U. S. "secret service".

This identity has left CIA with two alternative courses. Either it can ignore this popular tendency to dramatize it as the U. S. "cloak and dagger" center. Or it can seek to counteract this tendency by diverting emphasis from the covert to the overt side of its organization.

The latter alternative was the one favored in recommendations of the Dulles Report. Consequently in an effort to dim the lurid aura that provokes interest in its secret activities, CIA has sought to project itself to the public as an ordinary agency of government engaged in coordination of the U. S. national intelligence system.

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And although the original objective was a negative one, the agency has realized collateral benefits from this policy of diversion. For in admitting to its role in the intelligence system, CIA has helped reassure the public that policy is compounded on intelligence assembled from all sources in an orderly pattern.

Nevertheless there are those who still contend that overt activities are inseparable from acutely sensitive covert ones, that any information (whatever the intent) is potentially damaging to CIA. This traditional attitude probably permeates the intelligence community at large. It is apparent, therefore, that if CIA is to screen its covert activities by the overt, departmental intelligence agencies will have to be educated to the desirability of the technique.

Security is always a relative condition; it is never so good that it might not be better. Thus while CIA is neither apprehensive nor alarmed over the state of its security discipline, the agency is not satisfied that the security habits of its employees cannot be vastly improved.

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